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a multi-purpose tray provided below the document sheet outlet tray for holding at least one recording sheet and supplying a recording sheet one page at a time, wherein a user loads said at least one recording sheet directly onto said multi-purpose tray;

an image scanner that transports the document sheet from the document sheet supply tray, scans an image on the document sheet and discharges the document sheet onto the document sheet outlet tray; and

a recording part that transports the recording sheet from the multi-purpose tray, records an image on the recording sheet and discharges the recording sheet onto the recorded paper discharge tray, with the recorded paper discharge tray, the document sheet supply tray, the document sheet outlet tray and the multi-purpose tray being confined within the width of the image recording device.

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 6 are amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention. The applicants respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Response is fully responsive to the Office Action dated August 4, 1999.

As to the Merits:

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejections:

(1) claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kojima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,412,490) in view of Kaneko et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,822,075); and

(2) claims 4, 5, 9, 10 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kojima in view of Kaneko and in further view of Sakaue (European Patent Publication No. 0 673 147 A2).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

At the outset, with respect to the primary reference of Kojima the Examiner contends that Kojima discloses:

a printing unit provided with an image reading unit comprising a recorded paper discharge tray (21, figure 3) located at the top of the unit; a document sheet supply tray (6) located below the recorded paper discharge tray; a document sheet outlet tray (7) located below the document sheet supply tray; a paper cassette (13) (which reads on a multi-purpose tray) located below the document sheet outlet tray.¹

However, we note, that such teachings as characterized by the Examiner do not appear to be supported in the Kojima reference. That is, Kojima does not disclose or suggest a multi-purpose tray provided below the document sheet outlet tray for holding recording sheets, c2/42
as set forth in independent claims 1 and 6.

¹ Please see, lines 1 - 5, page 3 of the outstanding Action.

That is, according to Kojima, "a paper cassette 13 for accommodating printing papers therein is provided under the image reading unit 2 and a paper supply roller 14 is fixed above the tip end portion of the image reading unit 2."²

In other words, Kojima does not disclose a multi-purpose tray located below document sheet outlet tray, but instead discloses a paper cassette (13) for accommodating papers therein.

Moreover, Kojima fails to disclose that a user can load papers directly onto the multi-purpose tray since a user must detach or separate the paper cassette 13 from the printer 1 in order for a user to load paper into paper cassette 13.

As to the Kaneko reference, which the Examiner has relied upon as a secondary reference, such reference is merely relied upon for supplementing the teachings of Kojima in failing to teach "a recording sheet supply tray located below the multi-purpose tray for holding stacked recording sheets which are supplied one at a time."³

² Please see, lines 42 - 45, column 2 of Kojima.

³ Please see, lines 11 - 13, page 3 of the outstanding Action.

More specifically, the Examiner contends that “Kaneko discloses an image processing system comprising a sheet stacking unit (205) (which reads on a recording sheet supply part), for holding stacked recording sheets, and located below a sheet supply tray (204) (which reads on the multi-purpose tray).”⁴

However, Kaneko's sheet stacking unit 205 does not include a paper cassette which is attachable to and detachable from Kaneko's image forming apparatus.

Thus, even if, arguendo, the teachings of Kojima and Kaneko can be combined in the manner suggested by the Examiner, such combined teachings would still fall far short in fully meeting the applicants' claimed invention. As such, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have found the applicants' claimed invention obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Kojima or Kaneko, singly or in combination.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

⁴ Please see, lines 13 - 16, page 3 of the outstanding Action.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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